

STAT

Briefing

The Washington Post
The New York Times A28
The Washington Times
The Wall Street Journal
The Christian Science Monitor
New York Daily News
USA Today
The Chicago Tribune

Date 29 October 87

What They Don't Know

Distressed by what he calls "geographical illiteracy" among the country's youth, Senator Robert T. Stafford, a Vermont Republican, is holding a hearing today to consider what young people know and need to know about geography.

Anyone who questions whether illiteracy is too strong a word need only consider the results of a recent survey of high school seniors in seven cities, conducted for CBS affiliated stations. In Dallas, a quarter of the students could not name the country's closest neighbor to the south; 39 percent in Boston could not name the six New England states; 48 percent in Hartford could not come up with the names of any three countries in Africa.

Senator Stafford, the ranking Republican on the Education Subcommittee of the Committee on Labor and Human Resources, said that this lack of knowledge threatened to put the country at a political and economic disadvantage in the world.

The hearing will take place at the National Geographic Society's headquarters here. Among the witnesses will be Gilbert Grosvenor, the society's chairman; William J. Bennett, the Secretary of Education; Admiral Bobby Ray Inman, former deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency, and Warren E. Burger, the retired Chief Justice, who is a geography buff.

5